

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 FREETO 01623 221148Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 ACDA-12 MCE-00  
/072 W  
-----077026 221307Z /47

R 221130Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN  
TO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA  
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7724  
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE FREETOWN 1623

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PERP, SL, LI  
SUBJ: STEVENS WARNS REPORTERS ON LIBERIAN COMMENTS

REF: FREETOWN 1498

1. PRESIDENT STEVENS WARNED REPORTERS DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE HELD FRIDAY, MAY 19, TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT WHEN DESCRIBING MATTERS AFFECTING RELATIONS WITH FRIENDLY COUNTRIES. STEVENS WAS COMMENTING ON AN EDITORIAL IN A LIBERIAN NEWS-PAPER ON REPORTS CONCERNING THE DISCOVERY OF FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION AND THE CONVICTION OF FOREIGN NATIONALS FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION (REFTEL).

2. STEVENS SAID HE HAD RECEIVED PERSONAL ASSURANCES FROM LIBERIAN PRESIDENT TOLBERT AND IN LIGHT OF THESE ASSURANCES HE PERSONALLY WAS CERTAIN THE LIBERIAN GOVERNMENT IS WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH THE GOSL IN THE INVESTIGATION. HE SAID THE SINCERITY OF HIMSELF AND TOLBERT IN THE UPHOLDING OF THE MANO RIVER UNION AND PROTECTING ITS UNITY IS SOMETHING THAT NEVER IS IN DOUBT. STEVENS ADDED THAT THE GOSL IS INVESTIGATING VIGOROUSLY THE MATTER OF THE ARMS AND AMMUNITION AND APPEALED

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TO THE PRESS TO COOPERATE UNTIL THE INVESTIGATIONS ARE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED.

3. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
EMBASSY COMMENT: ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE FRANCIS MINAH REPEATEDLY HAS ALLEGED THAT LIBERIANS ARE SMUGGLING ARMS AND AMMUNITION INTO SIERRA LEONE TO SUPPORT

THE OPPOSITION SLPP. LOCAL SOURCES STATE MINAH MADE THE STATEMENT TO THE PRESS SPECIFICALLY CLAIMING LIBERIANS WERE INVOLVED IN THE REFERENCED CASE. DOUBT HAS BEEN EXPRESSED IN FREETOWN THAT THOSE CONVICTED ARE IN FACT LIBERIANS.

MINAH, WHOSE HOME IS IN PUJEHAN DISTRICT, ASTRIDE THE LIBERIAN BORDER, HAS POLITICAL PROBLEMS WITH HIS LOCAL PARAMOUNT CHIEF, S.A.B. MAGONA, WHO RECENTLY WAS RELIEVED FROM OFFICE BECAUSE OF THE DISCOVERY OF THE ARMS AND AMMUNITION. SOME SOURCES CLAIM MINAH IS DRAMATIZING THE ARMS CASE IN ORDER TO DISCREDIT MAGONA. END EMBASSY COMMENT. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.

NORTH

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** AMMUNITION, PRESS CONFERENCES  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**TAGS:** PEPR, SOPN, ETRD, SL, LI, SLPP, (TOLBERT, WILLIAM R), (STEVENS, SIAKA P),  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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